KRISHNA ENTERS MATHURA

from *Krishna Book,* Chapters 41 - 44
adapted for puppet theater by Bhurijana Dasa

* * * * *

CAST: Lord Krishna, Lord Balarama, Kamsa, Guard, Servant, Devaki, 2 Gopis, Washerman, Kubja, Mushtika, Chanura, Ugrasena.

SCENE ONE

The Palace of King Kamsa

Kamsa: The eighth child of Devaki is alive in Vrindavana. That rascal Vasudeva has tricked me, even while locked in my dungeon! He has hidden the eighth child of Devaki in the town of Vrindavana and now I know that He is Krishna, the cowherd boy. I have sent many powerful associates such as Putana and Trnavarta to kill Krishna and somehow or other they have all been killed. But, today I have a plan! (he calls) Chanura! Chanura! Chanura! Come Immediately!

Chanura: (a wrestler) Yes, Master! What may I do for you?

Kamsa: Chain that rascal, Vasudeva, in prison immediately and return at once as I have a plan and you are an important part of it.

Chanura: Yes, Master!

Kamsa: And when you return, be sure to bring the keeper of the elephants with you.

Chanura: Yes, Master!

Kamsa: Hmmmm, I will also send Kesiasura, he is very dangerous with his magic and Vyomasura, he is very clever... (music)

Chanura: I have returned, O King! Vasudeva and Devaki have been chained in prison and I have brought the caretaker of the elephants!

Kamsa: Ahhhh, you both should listen to me very carefully. You may know that I have been destined to be killed by Krishna. I want you, Chanura, to

arrange a Wrestling Match in Mathura. People will come from all around the countryside for the occasion of the Dhanur Yajna ceremony. We will display the giant sacred bow at that sacrifice. I will invite Krsna and Balarama and all the cowherd men. Then, in the wrestling arena, YOU, Chanura, will kill Krishna and Balarama!

Chanura and Elephant Caretaker: (they laugh heartily) Ahhh, ho ho!!

Kamsa: Caretaker!

Caretaker: Yes, King Kamsa!

Kamsa: I want you to be waiting outside the arena with the giant elephant Kuvalyapida! You should have Kuvalyapida kill Krsna and Balarama even before the wrestlers have a chance!

Caretaker: (laughs with glee) It will be my pleasure, King Kamsa!!!

Kamsa: Go, make all arrangements immediately! (they rush out) Good!
(Kamsa waits. Music. Kamsa paces back and forth across the stage very nervously. Suddenly he notices his shadow. Astonished, he slowly bends down and looks at it) What? My shadow has holes in it! I'd better go home and take rest. (he starts walking, looking over his shoulder occasionally, then he notices his footprints) How is this possible? I am walking on muddy ground, but I cannot see my own footprints! What's more, all the trees look as if they are made of gold! (a buzzing sound starts offstage and gradually gets louder and louder) I'm seeing all the luminaries in the sky as double! What are these evil omens? (high-pitched sound gets very loud; he holds his ears) What is this buzzing sound in my ears? What is happening to me?

(Kamsa returns to stage upright and more composed. Now he is getting ready for bed. Lays out a mat and a sheet) Well, everything seems better now; I must have just been ill for a moment. (he catches a glimpse of himself in a mirror) AHHHH! My reflection has no head! (jumps in bed and pulls the sheet over his head, Slowly he sits up and removes the sheet from his head) These are all signs of certain death! My only hope is that Krishna will be killed in the wrestling arena! (lays down to rest)

SCENE TWO

A Rooftop in Mathura

Gopi 1: From here on the roof, we will be able to see Krishna and Balarama clearly... I think that They're here!

Gopi 2: Here already?

Gopi 1: No, not yet, but I know that They will be here at any moment.

Gopi 2: Look! They have finally come! We've been waiting so long for this moment.

Gopi 1: I'm so excited!

Gopi 2: After hearing so much about Krishna and Balarama, we are finally going to see Them in person!

Gopi 1: Look over there Krishna and Balarama are coming this way!

Gopi 2: They are so beautiful! After seeing the beauty of these two boys, I can appreciate for the first time the good fortune of the inhabitants of Vrindavan.

Gopi 1: Oh, dear Krishna, as we see You with our eyes, we beg You to come and live in our hearts so that we may embrace You there to our full satisfaction.

Both together: All glories to Krishna and Balarama!

SCENE THREE

The Streets of Mathura

Balarama: Mathura is quite a city, isn't it, Krishna? See how the gates of the city are made of marble, and the doors of the gates are made with solid gold. The entire city is protected by cannons so that no enemy can easily enter.

Krishna: It is certainly wonderful. And look! Every house is decorated with silk cloth that is embroidered with jewels and pearls. And each one has trees, fruits and flowers in its own garden.

Balarama: Look over there!

Krishna: Look at all those palaces!

Washerman: (singing to himself while folding clothes) All glories to King Kamsa!

Krishna: Oh! Are you a washerman?

Washerman: Ha! I am not just A washerman, but I am King Kamsa's Washerman. And not only that, but I dye his clothing, ha ha ha!

Krishna: My dear Washerman, I would be very pleased if you would give Me this nice dyed clothing.

Washerman: I don't think you understand; I am the King's Washerman, and this beautiful dyed cloth is the King's beautiful dyed cloth. Now, I'll pretend that I didn't hear you, this time but don't make such a foolish request again!

Krishna: If you give Me this dyed cloth, you will become very happy and all good fortune will be yours.

Washerman: Huhhh?! You dare to ask again? How can it be that you are asking for clothing meant for your King? My dear boys, don't you have any shame? Asking for things that you don't have any right to will get you in trouble with the government men. They will arrest you. I have practical experience of this matter. They will put you into great difficulty. Anyone who wants to use the King's property is very severely punished. Now go away! Go away! Go before I punish you myself!

Krishna: You are a very foolish man! (Krishna kills him by slapping him near the ear) Balarama, let's take what We need and leave the rest for those who want it.

Krishna: See how the crossings of the roads are made of gold. Quite opulent, wouldn't you say?

Balarama: And it seems that all the homes were constructed by one engineer.

Krishna: Balarama, look at this funny-looking hunch-backed woman, carrying a dish of sandalwood pulp. I think I'll play a little joke. (to Kubja) O

tall young woman, who are you?

Kubja: What?

Krishna: Tell me, who are you carrying that pulp of sandalwood for?

Kubja: O beautiful dark boy, Shyamasundar, I am a maidservant of King Kamsa, and every day I please the King by bringing sandalwood pulp for him.

Krishna: I think that you should offer Me this sandalwood pulp, and if you do so, I am sure that you will be most fortunate.

Kubja: I can see that there is no one that should be served with this pulp of sandalwood other than You two brothers. I will certainly deliver it to You.

Krishna: I am very pleased with the devotion with which this girl has acted. How can I reward her? I know. I will press her feet with my toe and give her a little jerk here.

Kubja: Ohh! You have turned me into a beautiful young woman! Thank You, O beautiful one! I cannot leave You now. You must come to my house. I am very attracted by Your beauty. Please be kind unto me.

Krishna: My dear beautiful girl, I will certainly come to your house after I finish my other business in Mathura.

Kubja: You will?

Krishna: Yes, but now I must go.

Kubja: (flirtatiously) Good-bye! See you soon!

Balarama: I think we'd better get on to where the sacrifice is being held, Krishna! (They walk on while looking around and talking with each other) I think this is the arena, Krishna.

Krishna: Oh, really? Let's go inside! Oh, look at that giant bow they've prepared for the sacrifice! (he breaks the great bow easily and tosses it aside) It was so kind of King Kamsa to invite us to Mathura to take part in the sacrificial festival!

Balarama: Yes, let's go on in!

SCENE FOUR

Kamsa's Bedroom

Kamsa: Tomorrow is the day that I have awaited for many years. Tomorrow, Krishna will be killed. I have made many plans, and certainly one of them will be successful. Tonight will be my last troubled sleep. (knock knock knock) Come in! Come in!

Servant: I have some news about Krishna, Sire.

Kamsa: Ah... What? Good news? Tell me, has Krishna been killed yet?

Servant: Um, I'm afraid not, Sire. Ah, after the giant bow in the sacrificial arena was broken by Krishna, He killed all your soldiers that you sent to kill Him, and...

Kamsa: No, no, it's not true!

Servant: And when your washerman refused to give Krishna some of your dyed cloth, Krishna also killed him.

Kamsa: No. No! Get out of here, get out! I don't want to hear any more!

Servant: Yes, Sire.

Kamsa: I must start making my arrangements now. Today is my day, my last day to kill Krishna. Servant! Servant!

Servant: Yes, Sire?

Kamsa: Servant, awaken the wrestlers, Chanura and Mushtika, and tell them to start preparing for the wrestling match.

Servant: Yes, Sire.

SCENE FIVE

The Wrestling Arena

(Kamsa is seated on a raised platform. There is a loud kirtan and everyone is

shouting: “Jai Krishna and Balarama!”)

Kamsa: What is all that commotion over there?

Servant: Your nephews, Krishna and Balarama, are entering the arena.

Kamsa: How did they get away from my fierce killer elephant?

Servant: It was most amazing how He killed the elephant. The elephant came before Krishna like death personified, being provoked by its caretaker. The elephant suddenly rushed at Krishna and tried to catch him with its trunk, but Krishna moved behind the elephant, pulled its tail and dragged it for 25 yards. Krishna gave the elephant a strong slap and tripped it, making the elephant very angry. The elephant ran madly toward Krishna, but Krishna grabbed its trunk and pulled it down, jumped up and broke its back! Krishna killed the caretaker also.

Kamsa: Oh, this is terrible news! (Krishna and Balarama enter)

Krishna: O Kamsa, we have come to participate in your festivities.

Kamsa: Yes, I have wanted so long to meet with You. I would like to introduce You to the finest wrestlers in the land.

Mushtika: Ahhh! Notice my biceps and triceps, and my great overall size, enormous strength, physique and intelligence. (he growls) I am the famous Mushtika!!! And here is the great and powerful Chanura!!!

Chanura: (growls) We will fight with Krishna and Balarama and kill them!

Mushtika: Hmmm... These boys appear to be like thunderbolts.

Chanura: Yes, Krishna and Balarama, we have heard about You two; You are great heroes and Your arms are very strong.

Mushtika: King Kamsa especially wants to see Your great skills in wrestling.

Chanura: We have heard that while tending the cows in the forest, You enjoy wrestling with your friends.

Krishna: We feel very pleased that Kamsa wants us to wrestle with you, but usually we wrestle with boys of our own age.

Balarama: Do you think that the audience would like to witness an unequal match between huge wrestlers like you, and young boys like us?

Mushtika: Ha! Krishna, we can understand that You are neither a child nor a young boy.

Chanura: You and Your elder brother, Balarama, are "transcendental"!

Mushtika: You have killed the giant elephant, Kuvalaya-pida. He was able to kill many other elephants, and You have killed him in a wonderful way. Because You are so strong, You must wrestle with the strongest of us all, Therefore, I, Mushtika, will wrestle with You.

Chanura: Yes, and I, Chanura, will wrestle with You, Balarama!
(the fight begins)

1st Spectator: Dear friends, there is danger here! Even in front of the King, this wrestling is going on between incompatible sides!

2nd Spectator: Mushtika and Chanura are just like thunderbolts and as strong as great mountains but Krishna and Balarama are two delicate boys of tender age. The principle of justice has already left this assembly. Persons who are aware of the civilized principles of justice will not remain to watch this unfair match. They are unenlightened, therefore whether they speak or remain silent, they are being subjected to the reactions of material life!

3rd Spectator: But my dear friends, just look at the beautiful face of Krishna! There are drops of persperation on His face from chasing His opponent and His face appears like the lotus flower. And do you see how the face of Lord Balarama has turned especially beautiful? There is a reddish hue on His white face because He is engaged in a strong wrestling match with Mustika.
(The fight continues and Krishna and Balarama are eventually victorious. Everyone cheers. More wrestlers come to challenge Krishna and Balarama.)

Kuta: I will not be so soft on you Krishna! I am Kuta. Now you must wrestle with me! (Kuta is killed.)

Sala: I am Sala! I will kill you, Balarama! (Sala is easily killed.There is the sound of drums, cheers, flower petals fall from above. Kamsa is very angry.)

Kamsa: Stop this drumming! Stop this cheering! I order you to stop! Furthermore, I order that these two sons of Vasudeva be immediately driven out of Mathura! The cowherd boys who have come with them should be plundered and all their riches taken away! Nanda Maharaja should be arrested and killed for his cunning behavior, and the rascal Vasudeva should also be killed without delay! Also, my father, Ugrasena, who has always supported my enemies against my will, should be killed! Seize them all, seize them and kill them! Arrest them! Arrest them and kill them!

(Krishna jumps on the elevated seat, Kamsa draws his sword, but Krishna knocks his crown off. Then Krishna drags Kamsa off the elevated seat and down to the ground, and straddles him. Krishna strikes Kamsa over and over and over again, then He drags the dead body about. Balarama leads Ugrasena on and places the fallen crown on Ugrasena's head)

Balarama: Now my grandfather, Ugrasena, will assume his rightful position as the King of the Bhoja dynasty. All the citizens should be pleased to serve him. Protected by Krishna, he will be honored even by the demigods from the heavenly planets. Out of fear of Kamsa, the kings of the world were anxious and disturbed. Now they can live peacefully in Krishna Consciousness. (kirtan)

The End